



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Beyond question it is easier to execute the grotesqueries of Hartman than the canvases of Rosa Bonheur. But the bizarre, in all of the arts, by its very nature, makes only a transient appeal. Its apparent animation is a trick, a Punch and Judy business. It has no breath, no blood of its own. Reading the account of the satiric extravaganzas of Lytton, Peacock, and Butler, is like taking in one's hand the directory of a strange city. We turn to the chapter on the Realistic novel, and we are in our home town. To this 'realism' we still go when we hunger for romance, when we crave recognition of the potential nobility of mankind, and the reassurance of a fundamental hopefulness. "Out of approximately one hundred Victorian novels of the realistic type", we are told, "less than ten per cent. can be classified as tragic in outcome." Of rhetorical irony these novels contain an abundance. Of philosophical irony (a very different thing), the mood which sees life as "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing", there is none. Hardy, at the end of the era, is the first to surrender to this mood. The real Victorians satirized, not life, but its ugly excrescences, believing always that, could these be surgically removed, a sound and beautiful growth would be revealed.

We find the Victorian novel, then, aiming consciously at social betterment, judicious in attack, moderate in censure, wearing neither motley or mourning, and redeemed from heaviness in its didacticism by the humor of its satire. To-day we give the name of Realism to a product so steeped in gloom, that (whatever its artistic merit), to read much of it must argue a certain callousness of soul. The man of imagination, of 'sensibility', to use a very old-fashioned word, would find the life of a hangman cheerfuller than one of steady application to certain schools of fiction. Evidently we have become sadder men than our fathers were. Are we also, by so much, wiser ones?

E. B. F.

---

THE MOUNTEBANK. By William J. Locke. New York : The John Lane Company. 1921. Pp. 320.

"There must be something wrong with me", wrote Stevenson, "or my work would not be so popular!"

Popular Mr. Locke, of course, has something wrong with him, yet he must be given credit for what is right. Entertaining and debonair, his stories please through their cosmopolitan atmosphere, their touches of romantic glamor, and their obvious humanity. These qualities, combined with a simple philosophy and a spontaneous humor, make us feel that Locke's spirit is finer than his art.

*The Mountebank* is the story of a clown—his only traditions those of the circus—who finds himself at the end of the Great War Brigadier-General Andrew Lackaday, hopelessly enamored of the Lady Auriol Dayne. He cannot face the idea of going back to the old existence, the idea of General Lackaday making his living in the green skin tights of Petit Patou. The life in the army had seemed so much fuller than the old life, so much more vital, had yielded such satisfaction of soul. He is definitely unhappy at having been demobilized, being probably the only man, with a kind heart and with no thirst for either blood or excitement, who is not glad that the war was over. He makes desperate efforts at readjustment, but they end in nothing. Finally he is forced to return to the old life and take up the business of being a mountebank once more. He and Elodie, his "partner" in an arrangement of long standing, begin their work bravely enough, only to find that he has lost "that spiritual or magnetic contact with his audience which is the first element in artistic success, be the artistry never so primitive".

The story reaches its climax in such a complication that Elodie's chance of life-to-the-end-of-the-book appears negligible. Many a sophisticated reader may come within about forty pages of the end before he suspects the part Bakkus is to play in the unravelling. Soon thereafter he anticipates Mr. Locke's neat solution, only to find that he is mistaken. With *un peu de chagrin* he makes a half-hearted apology to Bakkus, and wonders a little disappointedly at Mr. Locke's stupidity in missing such a first-rate dénouement. Elodie must die then, after all—poor girl! But no! With a flourish of his clever pen, Mr. Locke does his best in surprises: Elodie does not die—far from it!—and instead of attacking Bakkus as a Don Juan one willingly acclaims him as a veritable Don Quixote.

E. B. M.